



## The Best Eggs Don't Just Get Good Grades – They Get USDA Grades!



The USDA Grade Shield is an added assurance of quality based on standards developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA grading service is the only inspection service for shell eggs, but not all eggs are officially graded by USDA. Egg packers who do not use the grading service may put terms such as "Grade AA" or "Grade A" on their cartons, but they may not use the USDA Grade Shield. Only eggs with the USDA Grade Shield have been checked by USDA graders to be sure they meet strict Government standards for quality.

Officially graded means:

- A USDA grader examined and certified that the eggs meet strict U.S. quality standards.
- The eggs were monitored continuously for quality assurance.
- The processing plant was maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Only USDA-approved cleansers and sanitizers were used in the processing plant.
- All cartons of USDA graded eggs were coded to indicate the consecutive day of the year the eggs were packed. A USDA grader assured that the eggs were fresh when packed.
- All cartons were also coded to identify the processing location.
- The eggs have not been returned from retail channels and repackaged.

USDA graders look for certain qualities before they will certify that eggs can be labeled with the USDA Grade Shield.

The USDA Grade Shield means:

- The eggs are fresh.
- The egg shells are clean and smooth.
- The egg shells are not cracked or broken.
- The eggs have yolks and whites that stand high and are firm.
- The eggs are the size stated on the label.

***So, what should you look for when buying eggs?  
The USDA Grade Shield!***